

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

DORGAN, Byron L. (Democrat)
Junior Senator from North Dakota
Elected 1992 to the US Senate
Present term expires January 2005



BACKGROUND

Born: Dickinson, North Dakota - 14 May 1942

Home: Regent, North Dakota

Marital status: Married (Kimberly) - 3 children (1 daughter deceased)

Religion: Lutheran

Education: U of ND, B.S. 1965; U of Denver, M.B.A. 1966

Military: None

Profession: Public Official

Political: Exec cmte, ND Democratic Party, 1969; ND Tax Commissioner, 1969-80; US House, 1981-92. Defeated Steve Sydnese (R) in the Nov92 general election with 60% of the vote, to succeed Sen Kent Conrad (D), who retired. (Conrad later entered the race for the seat of Sen Burdick (D), who had died on 8Sep92.) Reelected in 1998 with 63% of the vote.

Sen Dorgan is a moderate and populist who takes a liberal approach to foreign issues.

In the 107th Congress, offered an amdt requiring mandatory, advanced electronic information for air cargo and passengers entering the US. Suggested that when the Senate voted against the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, it sent a message to the rest of the world that "this is not our priority." Stated that arms control, arms reduction agreements, and threat reduction programs are one part of defending the country. Also supported developing and building new weapons systems, such as the F-22 fighter. Asserted that the missile defense system would not protect the US from a cruise missile attack by a terrorist state. Believed an attempt by the administration to deploy a national missile defense system in violation of the ABM Treaty would result in Russia, China, and other countries building more offensive weapons. Added that we are not spending enough resources to guarantee that shipping containers entering the country are safe. Believed the growing trade deficit was a very serious problem. Introduced with Sen Reid a bill that deals with the issue of Mexican trucks entering the US under the provisions of NAFTA. Opposed fast-track trade authority. Offered an amdt allowing private financing of agricultural sales to Cuba. Spoke in support of a World War II memorial on the Mall. Drew attention to funding in the DoD Appns bill that would go to the University of North Dakota and North Dakota State University. "From training helicopter pilots for the Army to developing a coating system to protect aircraft against weathering, our major universities are building expertise in areas that are going to attract students as well as generate the new industries and jobs that North Dakota so urgently needs." Was on a military transport plane (a C-130) that landed safely after losing one of its four engines when returning from Afghanistan in January 2002.

Additional: Daughter, Shelly, died 11/21/93, after undergoing open heart surgery. (Roll Call, 12/2/93, p.3) Dem Policy Cmte Co-chmn, 2001-2.

AF Bases: Grand Forks AFB, Minot AFB, MINUTEMAN Sites, Hector Field (ANG), Bismarck RRSS, Minot AFS

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